

Absentee Wives

Another Right-O Story
The Lesson of Summertime

By Dorothy Dix.

"Well," said the bookkeeper, "the good old summer time is here at last. The summer widower has bloomed out in all his dazzling beauty on the roof gardens, and that's an unfailing sign that there is going to be a hot time in the old town."

"Yes," assented the stenographer. "I saw a bunch of 'em last night looking like schoolboys playing hooky and frisking about like two-year-olds. Funny isn't it, how the loss of his wife always chirks a man up?"

"The procession of hump-shouldered, listless, grouchy men going down to the Grand Central to see their wives off for the summer and the same line of dead-game sports, with their hats set at a wicked angle, who fox-trot away from the station after wife's car pulls out, always makes me think of the 'before' and 'after' taking pictures of the patent medicine advertisements, while a six months' real widower always goes about looking as if he had got money from home."

"I don't see where the women who have nothing to do but to keep house butt into this vacation business, anyway," objected the bookkeeper. "Pretty fierce, I call it, for the wife, who doesn't need it, to get a hike around to all the glad spots, while the poor husband, who needs a rest, has to stay in town and hold down his job."

"Oh, it's a double-action blessing!" exclaimed the stenographer. "The wife is traveling for her husband's health."

"How is that?" inquired the bookkeeper.

"She's giving hubby a rest and a change," responded the stenographer. "Any woman who has wrestled with the servant question for a year, who has thought out 1,995 regular meals, and a few extra ones, who has had to cater to a family that demanded Delmonico fare on a quick lunch expenditure, and had to sew, and twist, and turn and straddle a dollar over a five-spot void, has earned a holiday."

"So has the husband, and if he can't get away from his business, the next best thing is to get away from the clack of his wife's tongue, the noise of the children, the everlasting monotony of home cooking, and the bondage of keeping home rules. It rests you, you know, to slip the collar."

"I should think too much Maria would get on a fellow's nerves," suggested the bookkeeper.

"Sure thing," replied the stenographer, "when people get to boring each other they take to throwing the hammer just for diversion and to liven things up. If most couples

were married only three days a week, instead of seven, matrimony would be a glad, sweet thing, instead of a scrapping-match.

"You have to get away from even the people that you love every now and then to get a focus on their virtues, just like you have to board for a while to get a line on all the comforts of home. That's what makes the summer vacation a life saving station for married folks."

"Maybe you're on," assented the bookkeeper.

"Oh, I'm Solomon all right," agreed the stenographer. "You have to give absence a chance to make the heart grow fonder. When a woman starts off on a summer vacation, she is sizing her husband up as an ordinary sort of dud, who doesn't shave as often as he ought to, and has a measly little soul that doesn't soar above the stock market, and as she looks at him she wonders what made her marry him."

"Before she has been away from home a week she gets out his photograph and thinks how handsome and distinguished looking he is. In two weeks more she has worked up a halo and encircled his noble brow with it, and by the time that summer is over he is once more the romantic hero of her youthful dreams."

"Same way with the man. If he is decent he runs a bluff about how sorry he is to see the wife go, and how lonely he will be without her; but in his heart he is thinking how he is going to whoop things up while she is gone, and how joyous it is going to be to come home any old hour at night without having to make a squeak-in."

"For the first week he tears things up with both hands. He makes a night of it with the boys and wakes up with a headache and a dark brown taste of remorse in his mouth. He sits in a little game and gets sleepy, and then he begins to find out that domesticity doesn't fit you to be a rounder, and that if you are used to going to bed at 10 you don't want to be kept up until 3 a. m."

"He soon tires of having to think what he wants to eat at restaurants, and when he finds out that he can't locate his clean clothes without a search warrant he begins to appreciate the love, fussy but reliable, that takes care of him, and by the time his Mary comes home in the fall she is once more the angel that he wooed and won, and he wouldn't trade her off for a whole pony hallet."

"I've noticed that the summer widower is a quitter," said the bookkeeper.

"Right-O," said the stenographer, "and as a promoter of domestic peace and happiness there is nothing like the summer vacation for wives."

GERMAN JOKE WAS COSTLY TO THIS MAN

"Poor Universe" Is Comment of William Kuhlman to British Police Chief.

EVANSVILLE, Aug. 3.—A little German joke at an inopportune time brought two months in prison on bread and water to William Kuhlman of this city, and insults and cruelties to his wife that caused her hair to turn white, according to the story he tells.

Kuhlman, who is of German birth, was manager for an English syndicate on the island of Trinidad, a British possession, when the war broke out. His wife was a native of Venezuela and prominently connected. They lived in the interior.

"In August, last year, I went to the city of Port-au-Prince to meet a mail steamer," said Kuhlman. "I knew nothing of war being declared. I saw the English chief of police and some negro policemen polishing some old muzzle-loading cannon in the public square and asked what was to be done with them. The chief replied: 'We are getting ready to blow up your German warships.' What have our warships been doing to you, I asked? On being told that war had been declared, I inquired who was at war

now and the chief replied 'Germany and the universe.'"

"Poor universe," I said and laughed."

Kuhlman declares that the chief then struck him in the face and the negro policeman pounced upon him and placed him in prison where some 200 other Germans were confined.

Kuhlman says that his wife subsequently was insulted and called vile names by negro cops when she sought information regarding his whereabouts.

"They grabbed my wife and tore her clothes from her body, and, while a white sergeant looked on, those negroes led her naked, through the street. They held her while her little boy was kicked like a football," said Kuhlman. "His ribs were broken and for six weeks he was between life and death."

Kuhlman says he finally escaped on the night of Sept. 30, when the guard was drunk. After climbing over the prison wall Kuhlman, with two other Germans, found a small sailboat in the harbor and started for the coast of Venezuela, 55 miles away.

From Venezuela Kuhlman went to Porto Rico and there caught an American steamer for New York. He was without money but found friends.

Afterward he was joined by Mrs. Kuhlman and their five-year-old son.

Willing Workers at Monson chapel will hold an ice cream social Saturday evening, Aug. 7.

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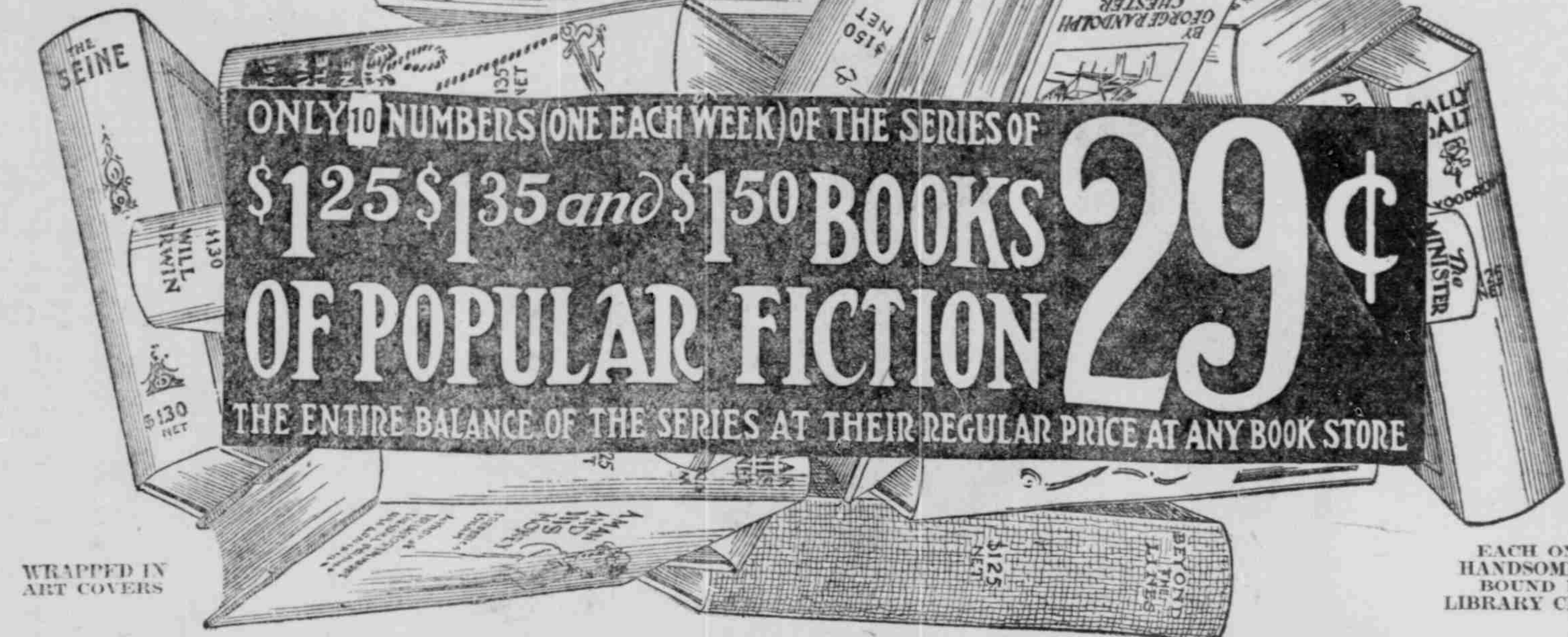
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This photograph was taken near the Barrage and shows the heavy work of preparation which the British troops are undergoing in Egypt before leaving for the Gallipoli and other fronts.

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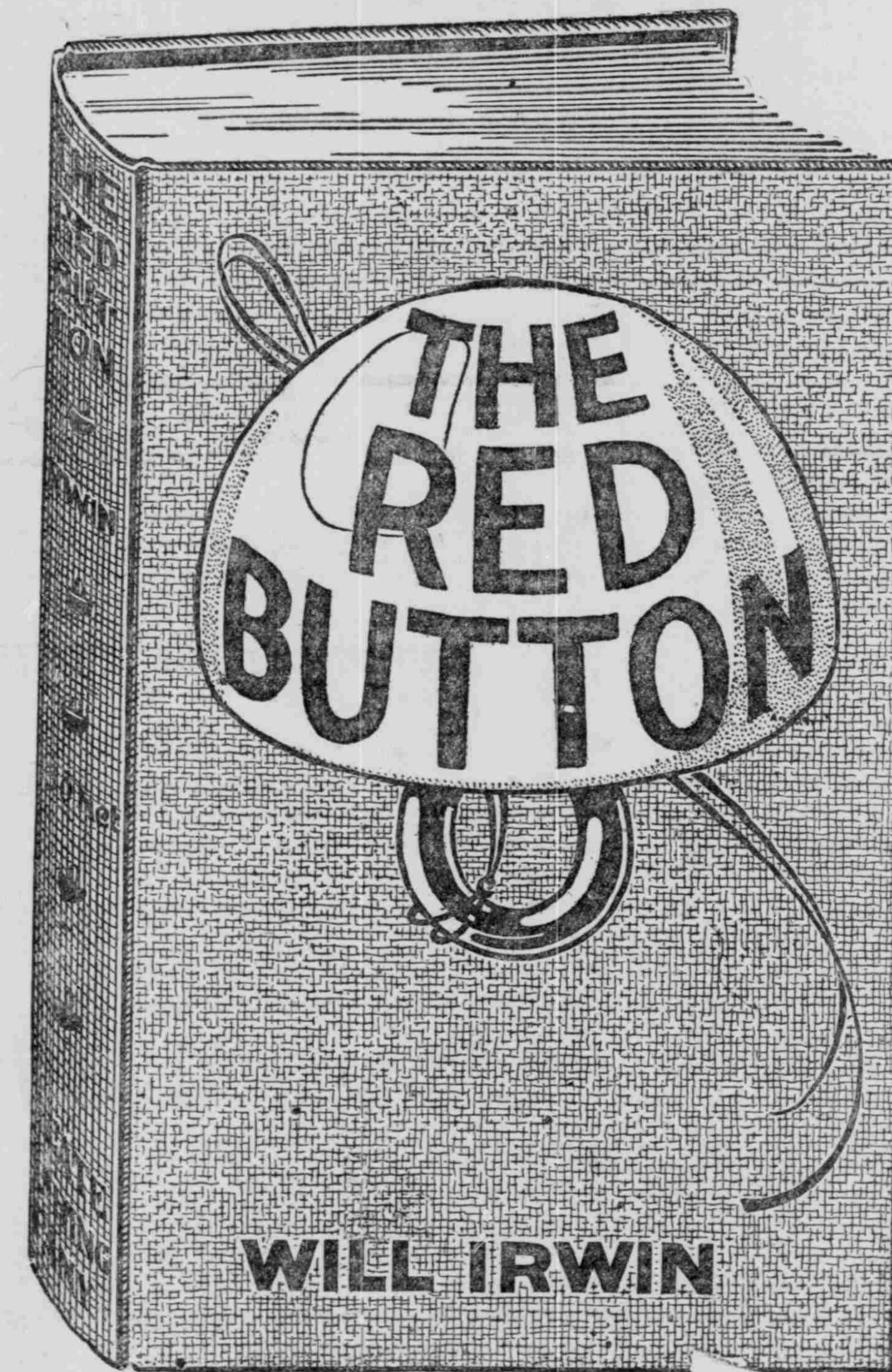
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